

Unit 2 Bargaining Priorities 2021





Introduction

- The CUPE 3906 Unit 2 (Sessional Faculty, Hourly Rated Music Faculty, and MELD Faculty) Collective Agreement expires on August 31, 2021.
- Your elected Bargaining Team is going into negotiations with our Employer, McMaster University, beginning this spring for a new Collective Agreement.
- The Collective Agreement governs your workplace rights and benefits as Unit 2 Members at McMaster University, including pay, benefits, health and safety, job security, and more.



Introduction (Cont'd)

- In the Spring of 2021, the Union sent out a survey to Unit 2 Members to determine your priorities at the bargaining table.
- The survey results, combined with feedback we've gathered over the past year, becomes the basis of our guiding priorities.
- We are asking Unit 2 members to agree to endorse these priorities by voting in favour of the priorities package. You will find instructions about voting at the end of this presentation.



Introduction (Cont'd)

- We have grouped your priorities into 6 categories:
 - Respect, Equity, and Inclusion
 - Compensation
 - Job Security
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Workload
 - Professional Supports and Paid Training



Respect, Equity, and Inclusion

- McMaster's *Statement on Building an Inclusive Community with a Shared Purpose* states that "inclusion occurs when an organization provides equitable access to its services, benefits and opportunities, when systems and structures facilitate full participation by all members and where members are treated equitably and fairly and are recognized for their contributions." Sadly, one of the most consistent and disturbing findings in our survey feedback was a lack of respect for Sessional Faculty at McMaster. These experiences are caused by a lack of support in day-to-day teaching, exclusion from Departmental activities and decisions, a lack of recognition for contributing to the success of the university, unfair hiring processes, and even online bullying from students. The Bargaining Team would like to incorporate language into the agreement that would acknowledge the service and contributions of our members to the University, and to demonstrate inclusiveness by foreclosing situations and circumstances that allow for bullying, harassment, nepotism, and discrimination in all of its forms.



Compensation

- As always, remuneration is a vital part of the bargaining process. McMaster is proud of its ranking as one of Canada's top schools and a top-150 university in the world. We know that Sessionals play a vital role in this and deserve much higher remuneration. Some members have contributed decades of their lives to this institution, with little to show on a bi-weekly basis and nothing to show for retirement. Compensation can take a variety of forms, including wages and pensions. We will be seeking increases that reflect McMaster's high global and national ranking and demand that we be compensated in line with Sessionals at other universities.



Job Security

- Our membership is diverse, and consists of people who work both in industry and teach, younger Sessionals (often graduate students) who are new to teaching, and long-term Sessionals whose income is dependent upon sessional work. While all Sessionals deserve job security (and our provisions will reflect this), the latter group of long-term Sessionals in particular require improved job security as their access to secure work is precarious even though the employer clearly requires their services on an ongoing basis. Also, some members have shown decades of commitment to McMaster and contribute to the University's reputation of teaching excellence. All members deserve to be able to plan to retire in dignity. We're asking McMaster to help members live and retire with some basic security. Your Union will propose language to make access to work more predictable, steady, and known in advance in an effort to mitigate against the precarious nature of sessional work.



Health and Wellbeing

- While the Union has bargained a number of benefits for Unit 2 Members over the years (including a Health Care Spending Account (HCSA) and a Dental Plan), there are definite shortfalls in this funding. These shortfalls have become even more evident in the last year of online teaching during the pandemic, as many members made clear by identifying basic medical coverage and mental health supports as key priorities in our survey. Unit 2 members deserve more comprehensive, stable, and affordable health and dental benefits, which we hope to expand. The Bargaining Team is seeking more support from the Employer to sustain current health and dental benefits and explore new benefits for members' peace of mind and day-to-day wellbeing.



Workload

Members have identified workload as a significant concern on our bargaining survey and in daily conversation. In some cases, the number of students per course has tripled with the move to online teaching, with no additional supports provided. We need to make sure that there are no surprises when it comes to class size, and that members are better supported when faced with more students. Studies show that smaller classes are also better for students. The extra work that BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) members and members from other equity-seeking groups perform to make students feel included and to increase diversity in departments should be recognized. We need to make sure that all of those "extras" you do as front-line instructors are compensated. Institutions that are comparable to McMaster in size and prestige offer more supports for contract faculty's workloads than McMaster, so we are asking the Employer to step up and recognize your workload and some of the "extras" that now seem to be part of the job.



Professional Supports and Paid Training

- As we prepare to enter a second year of COVID precautions, online teaching will once again be a feature of many of our members' lives. Even before the pandemic, members have consistently identified a lack of professional supports over the past few years. Professional supports include access to professional development and resources such as technology and access to paid training (including anti-oppression and diversity training) that is to the high pedagogical standards one expects of McMaster University. The Bargaining Team is exploring language to secure and improve professional supports for our members--the people who contribute so much to McMaster's reputation for teaching excellence.



What's Next?

- We are asking you to endorse these six bargaining priorities (Respect, Equity, and Inclusion; Compensation; Job Security; Health and Wellbeing; Workload; Professional Support and Paid Training) for this round of negotiations.
- These priorities will guide your Bargaining Team in their decisions at the table.
- This doesn't mean that we will not negotiate on other aspects of the Collective Agreement. This "ask" is one more way for us to know what is important to you as Unit 2 members.



What's Next? (Cont'd)

- You will have other opportunities to have your say about the Collective Agreement we negotiate. Other, formal votes (including mandatory, legislated votes such as a ratification vote, and, if necessary, a strike vote) will take place before this process concludes.
- We will also be soliciting your feedback through more informal means throughout this process. You will likely hear from our Bargaining Support Committee and/or Member Mobilizer directly before the end of the summer!



How do I vote?

- Unit 2 members will receive a voter ID and password to vote via McMaster email from an online platform called “Election Runner”
- Please check your “junk” email folder for the link!
- Members will be asked the following question: Do you approve the Unit 2 Bargaining Priorities Document as presented/amended on June 7, 2021? The options will be **Yes** or **NO**



How Do I Vote? (Cont'd)

- Your vote will then be encrypted and logged anonymously. Your email and username will only grant you access to the polls and will not be associated with your vote. Once the polls are closed, Election Runner will automatically tally the results.
- Voting begins June 7, 2021, at approximately 5:00 P.M., and runs until Thursday, June 10th, 2021 (end time TBA).



Questions or Concerns?

- If you have questions or concerns about this process, please contact us at president@cupe3906.org, brad@cupe3906.org, or mary@cupe3906.org
- On behalf of your Bargaining Team, we thank you!